registered with any government agency. IN view of this it is not possible to conduct anY systematic and detailed study in this aspect. It is left to thE exporter-importer to enter into contracts in any currency.

Vacant Posts of Judges in Supreme Court and High Courts

1020. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI;

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE b_e pleased to state:

(a) how many posts of Judges are lying vacant in the Supreme Court and the High Courts;

(b) how many cases are pendig in the above Courts at present; and

(c) what steps are being taken to ease the burden of workload on these Courts?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND). (a) There are 6 vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court and 70 vacancies of Judges/ Additional Judges in various High Courts.

(b) 200566 cases were pending in the Supreme Court as on 31-1-1989 and 1615152 cases were pending in various High Courts of 4he country as on 31-12-1987.

(c) Recommendations for reducing arrears, on the basis of a Report by a Committee of 3 Chief Justices, have been sent to the High Courts for ap propriate action. The sanctioned strength of the High Court Judges has been increased from 351 in March, 1977 t_0 450 in February, 1989. The Judge strength of the Supreme Court Has also been raised from 18 to 26.

Persons killed by Wild Elephants i Assam

1021. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHA^ RAVARTY: Will the Minister of Ef VIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pl< ased to state;

(a) whether Government are awai of the depredation of several rur areas of Assam by the wild elephan thus creating a sense of consternatic in the hearts of people;

(b) whether it is a fact that wi. elephants have killed a good numb; of people in certain areas in Assam

(c) if so, what, is the total mini[1] of persons killed by wild elephants Assam during the period from 1986 1988; and

(d) whether Central Govemme: have acceded to the request made I the Assam Government for permissk to catch wild elephants in the fores of Assam?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIROr MENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. I ANSARI): (a) and (b) Governme are aware that wild elephants hay killed a certain number of people ar caused depredation and consternatic in some areas of Assam.

(c) Total number of persons repo ted to be killed by elephants in A sam during 1986 to 1988 is one hum red and thirty-eight.

(d) The Central Government h; given permission to capture 100 el phants in 1985-86, subject to certa conditions. Although, Assam Fore Department captured 95 elephan against this sanction, some stip lations of the sanction requiring hi bitat improvement were not complii with. Government of Assam has tM refore been requested to take i measures to improve the elepha; habitat rather than seeking to redu' the elephant population through fres captures.